



MUSEUM NEWS

Steyning Museum Newsletter

June 2015

Museum Diary

- 16.09.15 Sussex Produce
Charity Dinner
Sussex Produce Shop
- 26.09.15 The Big Draw
Museum and Penfold Hall
- 31.10.15 Autumn Coffee Morning
Penfold Hall
10.30 - 12.00
- 19.03.16 Annual General Meeting
Penfold Hall
2.30pm

200 Club

April Draw

- 1st prize = Judy Krolick (£35)
2nd prize = Jacquie Buttriss (£25)
3rd prize = Vice Marshall Kemp (£15)

May Draw:

- 1st prize = Heather Ward (£35)
2nd prize = Dennis Freedman (£25)
3rd prize = Mary Travers (£15)

School Museum Enterprise Project

from Joan Denwood

From January to Easter this year, Years 3 and 4 at Steyning Primary School were working on a topic about WW2. This was to be an enterprise project involving an aspect of the local community. It was intended to raise money (with some coming to us) and was to culminate in the children creating their own WW2 museum. This was where we came in.

We visited the school to tell them how we organised our museum, then they visited us to look at displays, lighting, labelling, etc as well as our WW2 and WW1 displays. We took visitors to talk to them and they also went to Newhaven Fort. They had lots of other visitors - family members and local people to talk to them too.

What a magnificent venture it was. They opened their WW2 museum to those involved for just 2 days and we were invited along. They had used 4 classrooms, the dance studio, the hall and they also had an authentic outdoor 'Dig for Victory' garden, with tasters!

One classroom displayed *Uniforms and Memories* with life-sized paintings of people in uniform, also photos, medals, diaries etc, and visitors could have their photo taken in uniform. Another classroom was the *Evacuation Room* with 'What can I take with me', Anne Frank, marble maze displays and a theatre corner where the children performed plays they had written. Another was the *Rationing and Dig for Victory* room with garden plans and designs and displays about rationing. The 4th classroom was *The Blitz* where replicas of air raid shelters (Anderson, Morrison and underground shelters) had been built and there were Blitz themed paintings, poems and model WW2 aircraft. In the dance studio the children performed the Lambeth Walk and visitors could join in too!



In the hall they had a display of radios the children had made, a model of a tank and huge Spitfire they had made. There was a 1940's style cafe with helpers and children dressed up and selling their own homemade cakes. Finally, there were tables of gifts for sale which the children had also made.

The children were fully involved in the 'open days', being timetabled so that they knew where to be and when, with duties such as welcoming visitors and showing them around, performing in the theatre or dance studio, digging in the garden and so on; it was a wonderful feat of organisation of which the children and staff could be justly proud. The enthusiasm of the teachers and children really shone through the whole proceedings. The displays were clear, imaginative and very informative. Some of our stewards were able to go along as well and I know they were impressed with the children's achievements. It was very exciting for us at Steyning Museum to be involved with their museum and we look forward to being involved in future projects.

Spring Coffee Morning

from Maggie Hollands:

We had a very successful Spring coffee morning on April 11th held at the Penfold Hall. Thank you to all who joined us making it a most enjoyable occasion. We made a profit of £274 towards funds for our Museum. We did very well on the stalls, especially the plants and bric a brac. Thank you for all the lovely cakes which were made by volunteers, delicious as usual, and thanks also for those people who donated plants, bric a brac and raffle prizes.

A reminder for those who receive this newsletter in time - on June 6th at 3pm we have a 1940's themed cream tea with music and home made scones. This will be held in the garden at "Jarvis", Jarvis Lane. Tickets

can be obtained in advance from the Museum for £4, or on the day at the gate for £5. Also, our Autumn coffee morning this year is October 31st held as usual in the Penfold Hall.

Maintenance

Keeping the Museum in good order is something that is always on our minds. Recently, you may have noticed if you have come in, that the carpet tiles in the entrance lobby have been changed as they were showing their age. So too were those in the study area, so they have also been upgraded.

Sussex Produce Charity Dinner

from Erica Gayler:

This was a very successful event last year and so we have decided to repeat it. We are holding the event on Wednesday 16th September and we really hope that many of you will be able to come along. The dinner will cost £22.50 for 2 courses (main course & pudding) and you will have an opportunity to choose what you would like when you purchase your ticket from the Sussex Produce shop. A special menu has been arranged for us with 3 main courses and 3 different puddings to choose from. This is a fund raising event for the Museum where we benefit £5 from each dinner ticket that is sold. Watch out for notices around Steyning and in the Museum during August when we will be announcing when the tickets are for sale.

Sussex Produce are also donating a hamper (value £50) for us to raffle. The hamper will be on display in the Museum from 1st August with raffle tickets on sale for £1 each; the draw will take place at the dinner.

Church Guide

Overleaf, Sarah Leigh brings us up-to-date with the new church guide.

Tony Kettelman
Editor

Church Guide

Regular readers of these columns will remember reading about my struggles with the church guide and in our last issue I reported that we were about to publish it. You will be glad to hear that I have at last muddled through to the point where the main guide is on sale in the Museum and in the Parish Church. We haven't yet been able to publish the short walk round guide which will be available with it, but that should follow in a few weeks.

I never expected to be trusted to design a 12th century church doorway. However, as I explained in my April report, we had commissioned drawings by a gifted illustrator, Maggie Kneen, of what the church would have looked like when originally finished in around 1180. Most of this was easy as we could rely on either what remains (4 bays of the nave and the south door) and on the advice of our splendid expert Professor Malcolm Thurlby. We all agreed that there were probably originally six bays of the nave (we know there were at least five, as we can still see where the next one, demolished 400 years ago, begins). But beyond saying that there most probably had been a west doorway Malcolm would not commit himself about its design, so Maggie and I decided to choose decorative features from the nave which was probably built by the same team. Of course we don't *know* that, but it seems more likely than not, and we needed a west door so we threw caution to the winds, and we hope to be forgiven. Malcolm described the result as "superb" so at least he's happy.

One of the great joys and surprises of the process has been the constant flow of new discoveries. On the other hand sometimes one would like the flow to stop so that one could publish the guide without fear of being contradicted by new developments. Despite years of efforts and much help from other people I never succeeded in finding out for certain exactly when the present East End of the church was built. I am reasonably sure that it must have been sometime between 1796 and 1815.

One valuable by-product of that has been the transcript of the journals of the 11th Duke of Norfolk. We know that this redoubtable old party, familiarly known to myself and David Thompson as "Charlie", caused the east end wall of the church to be rebuilt, and he died in 1815. I'm sure he must have built our tall narrow arches but we can find no trace of this work in his journals and the Arundel account books. We acquired copies of all his journals and David has now, working on it almost continuously for about two years, transcribed almost all of these. The result is an archive which will be of enormous value to researchers in many different parts of England, as the Duke's interests and properties were so widespread that researchers in Horsham, Shoreham, Brighton, London, Surrey, Leeds, Herefordshire and of course in his native Cumbria and many others will benefit enormously.

However I have been very nervous that some information would come to light after the guide was published which would contradict it. Imagine my agitation when the very day before the new guide was delivered I learnt that in that very week a drawing of the inside of the church by Petrie in 1802 had come to light and was coming up for auction at Sotheby's. I waited until mid-morning when 27 boxes of Guides arrived, took one out of one box, got on a train to London and went to Sotheby's. (The drawing is one of about 250 which I am glad to say the Sussex Archaeological Society succeeded in buying.) It doesn't show the chancel clearly and Chris Tod and I are still trying to decide what it does show. I didn't know whether to be relieved or disappointed.

If you haven't yet got your copy of the Guide, now's your chance – they are in the Museum, the Church and the Steyning Bookshop, cost £4.50. £2 from every copy will go to help maintain our magnificent 835-year old church.

Sarah Leigh